

Shootout with Father



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A richly textured novel about the love-hate conflict between a father and his grown son. The story is told by the son, James, a sculptor of small objets d'art, miniature versions of the armor his father has spent a lifetime collecting. The father's ambiguities become the son's obsession and he finds himself digging deeper and deeper into his father's past in an effort to understand the man before he was a father. He discovers a student filled with romantic dreams and high hopes, a latent homosexual who, after a bizarre episode of dashed expectations rejects his nature and builds a fortress of denial. These revelations come to light in a suspenseful, multi-layered plot that is delivered with a remarkable mixture of sensitivity and biting wit. Marianne Hauser reveals the story from inside the mind of the main character, alternating emotional tirades with bright snippets of memory, the overall effect being one of astonishing intimacy. This work is vintage Hauser, an Oedipal companion piece to her previous work *The Talking Room*, recounting the astonishingly suicidal lengths to which the child in everyone will go to be acknowledged by his or her creator.

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